

Members

Sen. Connie Lawson, Chairperson
Sen. Vi Simpson
Rep. Mary Kay Budak
Rep. Vanessa Summers
Jim Freeland
Suzanne Draper
Keith Weedman
Dan Carmin
Margery Justice
James Payne
Mitch Roob



SELECT COMMITTEE ON REORGANIZATION OF CHILD SERVICES

LSA Staff:

K.C. Norwalk, Attorney for the Committee
Karen Firestone, Fiscal Analyst for the Committee
Sarah Brooks, Fiscal Analyst for the Committee

Authority: P. L. 234-2005

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MEETING MINUTES¹

Meeting Date: November 8, 2005
Meeting Time: 1:00 P.M.
Meeting Place: State House, 200 W. Washington
St., Room 431
Meeting City: Indianapolis, Indiana
Meeting Number: 3

Members Present: Sen. Connie Lawson, Chairperson; Sen. Vi Simpson; Rep. Mary Kay Budak; Rep. Vanessa Summers; Jim Freeland; Suzanne Draper; Keith Weedman; Dan Carmin; Margery Justice; James Payne; Mitch Roob.

Members Absent: None.

Chairperson Lawson called the third meeting of the Select Committee on the Reorganization of Child Services ("Committee") to order at 1:15 P.M.

Child Care

Jim Robertson, Director of the Division of Family Resources, Family and Social Services Administration

Mr. Robertson began his presentation by explaining that the Division of Family Resources ("Division"), which is a division of the Family and Social Services Administration, has several initiatives to improve child care services in Indiana. These initiatives include:

¹ Exhibits and other materials referenced in these minutes can be inspected and copied in the Legislative Information Center in Room 230 of the State House in Indianapolis, Indiana. Requests for copies may be mailed to the Legislative Information Center, Legislative Services Agency, 200 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2789. A fee of \$0.15 per page and mailing costs will be charged for copies. These minutes are also available on the Internet at the General Assembly homepage. The URL address of the General Assembly homepage is <http://www.in.gov/legislative/>. No fee is charged for viewing, downloading, or printing minutes from the Internet.

- (1) Updating home child care rules.
- (2) Expanding the Pathways to Quality program statewide. This program currently exists in Muncie and ranks child care facilities in terms of quality. It is a voluntary program, but there are some costs involved for the Division.
- (3) Examining child care ministries. The number of child care ministries has expanded greatly in the past couple of years. Some child care ministries have very loose affiliations with a church and probably should not be classified as a child care ministry.

Mr. Robertson also discussed the use of swipe cards to enter child care centers. Mr. Robertson stated the company that sells the system may stop selling it because only two states have required swipe cards for child care centers. Additionally, there were technical difficulties and complaints when the swipe cards were first required, but the difficulties and complaints are much lower now.

Senator Lawson brought up the issue of whether the Division should be a part of the Department of Child Services ("Department"). Senator Lawson further stated that the Department is very busy now and it is not the best time to move the Division to this new agency.

Candace Shelton, Children's Coalition of Indiana

Ms. Shelton explained to the Committee that it is her preference that the Department be responsible for regulating child care in Indiana. Ms. Shelton stated that approximately 75% of children in Indiana require some out of home child care and the vast majority of these children require more than 30 hours a week of child care. Because of the large number of children in daycare, Ms. Shelton stated that the Department should have control over child care issues because the Department would have a more humanist approach and would be able to better focus on child care issues than the Family and Social Services Administration.

Sharon Pierce, The Villages of Indiana

Ms. Pierce, who was formerly a member of the Board for the Coordination of Child Care Regulation, also explained to the Committee that she believes the Department is the best agency to be responsible for regulating child care. Ms. Pierce stated that because the Department's primary goal is child safety, it only makes sense that the Department have these responsibilities.

Department of Child Services Proposed Legislation

Committee member James Payne and Wendy Yerkes, Director of the Child Support Bureau within the Department of Child Services, reviewed the DCS Legislative Agenda - 2005 (Exhibit #1) and the Child Support Legislative Agenda - 2005 (Exhibit #2).

Senator Lawson suggested that for issue #4 in Exhibit #1, that fact finding be completed in 30 days compared to the Department's suggestion of 45 days.

Concerning issue #1 in Exhibit #2, language currently is in the code that allows child support payments that are withheld in income withholding to be forwarded to the state central collection unit or "some other person specified in the support order." Ms. Yerkes explained that because this language allows income withholding to go to an entity other than the state central collection unit, it violates Federal law and Indiana could lose Federal funds if the language is not removed from the code.

Ms. Yerkes also elaborated on issue #2 in Exhibit #2, regarding paternity affidavits. Ms. Yerkes and Mr. Payne explained that the best opportunity to establish paternity is at

the time of the birth of a child. Mr. Payne further stated that if paternity is established early, an application for TANF and other programs could be easier.

Senator Simpson stated that she was concerned about an alleged father's due process if a man signs a paternity affidavit and later has doubts about the paternity. Mr. Payne explained there will still be a procedure to have a genetic test to determine paternity.

Selection of Next Meeting Date

The final meeting of the Committee is scheduled for November 29, 2005, at 1:00 P.M. in Room 431 of the State House.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:20 P.M.